**Increase in earnings of Railways**

1292. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the main factors leading to increase of passenger traffic, loading earnings in Railways in the recent past;

(b) whether they are not due to external factors or other factors rather than that of Railways; and

(c) whether the increase in question would be maintained and further increased for the years to come?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Main factors leading to increase of passenger traffic, loading earning in Railways in recent past are:—

(i) Introduction of new trains;
(ii) Augmentation of load of existing trains;
iii) Running of special trains as and when required;
(iv) Extensive ticket checking drives;
(v) To ease ticket distribution introduction of ticketing through internet, Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS), opening additional windows where required, etc.
(vi) Various new incentive schemes introduced by Railways like Dynamic Pricing Policy, the Engine on load etc.

(b) External factors like economic improvement also helped in improvements in Railways.

(c) All efforts are made by Railways to maintain present level of traffic and earnings with further efforts to achieve higher growth in passenger/freight segments.

**Formation of new South Western Zone**

1293. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) considering the fact that the Salem Division has been formed, whether Government would consider the formation of a new zone to be called the South Western Zone, consisting of Trivandrum, Palghat, which would consist

of areas from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and would be viable, economically and technically; and

(b) whether this proposal would be favourably considered and early action would be taken for its speedy implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise

**Rail projects of NER**

1294. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of rail projects in the NER which are to be taken up with the Asian Development Bank loan;

(b) the time by which the works on these projects are likely to be taken up; and

(c) the details of time schedules for completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. No such project is being taken up with the assistance of Asian Development Bank.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Gauge conversion of Chhindwara-Nagpur railway line**

†1295. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the date on which the gauge conversion work between Chhindwara-Nagpur narrow gauge line was cleared alongwith the cost thereof;

(b) the amount allocated for the project during current financial year and the amount spent on this, so far;

(c) by when the work is targeted to be completed; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.